DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 166 295 UD 019 035

AUTHOR Howitt, Arnold M.; Moniz, Rita
TITLE Ethnicity and Political Organization. Discussion Paper D 76-4. Urban Planning Policy Analysis and Administration.
INSTITUTION Harvard Univ., Cambridge, Mass. Dept. of City and Regional Planning.
PUB DATE 5 Sep 76
NOTE 44p.; Paper prepared for delivery at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association (The Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, September 2-5, 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Blacks; Civil Rights; Cultural Factors; *Ethnic Groups; *Ethnicity; *Ethnic Relations; *Political Influences; *Political Power; Portuguese Americans; Racial Attitudes; Social Influences
IDENTIFIERS *Cape Verdeans; *Massachussetts (New Bedford)

ABSTRACT

There are circumstances under which ethnicity becomes the basis for political action in contemporary America. For example, the uncertain orientation of Cape Verdeans' political participation in New Bedford stems from the complex nature of their ethnic identity. Despite cultural dissimilarities from and limited contact with blacks in New Bedford, Cape Verdeans have not wholly escaped being identified as blacks by others. And, because of racial status distinctions in American Society, most Cape Verdeans prefer to maintain their ties to the larger Portuguese community in the city. However, the lack of continuing political organization in New Bedford, black political activism in the 1960s, and an eye toward potential political gain encouraged many Cape Verdeans to join the United Front thus adopting the rhetoric of black identity. When circumstances began to change relatively early in the life of the United Front, more traditional patterns of politics were followed. As a result, the United Front lost most of its political influence. When gains anticipated by the Cape Verdeans did not materialize, the Cape Verdean ethnic identification reappeared. The realities of ethnic stratification in New Bedford overcame the political alliance between Cape Verdeans and resident blacks. (EB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED166295

JAN 4 1979

Urban Planning Policy Analysis and Administration

Ethnicity and Political Organization

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Arnold M. Howitt
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

by Arnold M. Howitt
and Rita Moniz

Discussion
Paper D 76-4

September 1976

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Department of City and Regional Planning

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

UD019035

ETHNICITY AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Arnold M. Howitt
Department of City and Regional Planning
Harvard University

and

Rita Moniz
Department of Political Science
Brown University

Prepared for delivery at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, The Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, September 2-5, 1976.

ETHNICITY AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Arnold M. Howitt and Rita Moniz

On May 5, 1968, in the wake of the murder of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., the United Front, a fledgling black organization in New Bedford, Massachusetts, presented 80 demands to Mayor Edward F. Harrington. As a package, the demands called for changes in city policy on education, recreation, employment, housing, and police-community relations. In the months that followed, the United Front staged several protest marches to dramatize its demands and began bargaining with the mayor and other city officials over the proposed policy changes. On some issues, the organization received a sympathetic hearing and extracted concessions from the city administration. Yet despite this success, the United Front's mass following waned quickly. To revive it and to expand their political influence, the United Front's leaders turned to electoral politics but met defeat. Today, the organization endures, albeit in new form as the United Front Development Corporation. It is less active in city politics, but it administers a 200-unit housing project that it built with state loans and mortgage guarantees.

In outline, these events do not seem too different from what was happening elsewhere in the same period. Black leaders in many cities took advantage of both the nation's shock at the King assassination and its fears of the riots that followed to articulate their grievances about the treatment of black people in the United States. By 1968 blacks had already demonstrated the effectiveness of protest as a political resource and had been disappointed by its failure to sustain a mass following or to translate into electoral power. Even the United Front's eventual transformation into a development corporation was not unprecedented.

Yet in the context of New Bedford politics these events <u>were</u> out of the ordinary. A significant percentage of the United Front's leaders and followers were Cape Verdeans - immigrants and their descendants from the Cape Verde Islands, a Portuguese colony off the west coast of Africa. A multi-racial group but culturally quite different from other minorities in New Bedford, the Cape Verdeans have maintained residential and social separation from these minorities, clustering and associating more frequently with the

sizable "European" Portuguese population.[1] Traditionally, Cape Verdeans have not identified themselves as black Americans, although they are treated as such by many outside of New Bedford; nor had more than a handful allied themselves politically with blacks. Thus, the United Front - as a formally organized political association based on ethnic identity - was a rarity in New Bedford, despite its heterogeneous population. In fact, political associations of any sort were infrequently found in the unorganized political system of the city.

As we sought to understand the circumstances of the United Front's political actions, we became convinced that an explanation did not depend on idiosyncratic factors in the behavior of a small ethnic group in a medium-size city in southeastern Massachusetts. Instead, we shall argue that the existence of the United Front can best be explained by re-examining and refining the insights of the literature on ethnic politics in the United States.

In the past decade and a half social scientists have gone "beyond the melting pot" to explore the causes and consequences of persisting ethnic identification in American society.[2] At the same time, others have greatly expanded our knowledge of ethnic relations in developing nations. Increasingly, the latter researchers have questioned the theoretical utility of regarding ethnic identification as either a primordial self-image or an ascribed constant. Instead, they have emphasized that group boundaries are sometimes fluid, susceptible to widening or narrowing, and that group identity is contextual, subject to influence from social, economic, and political environments.[3] In short, they have regarded ethnic identification as a variable.

To some extent these insights have been applied to analyses of ethnicity in the United States,[4] but they have not been widely considered in investigations of ethnic political behavior. Researchers have infrequently considered groups whose ethnic identity may be problematic. This is not as common a situation in the United States as it is in the developing world, where the forces of tribalism, colonialism, and nationalism have woven a complex web of conflicting identities. But the situation is not unimportant here. In politics in New York City, for example, what does the term "Puerto Rican" mean?[5] Do citizens from other Latin American countries include themselves

in this category? How do non-Latino New Yorkers classify a person from Haiti or Honduras? We are concerned with the conditions under which ethnic identity becomes the basis for political action in American politics, and it seemed likely that studying a group whose identity was ambiguous, especially where the situation was overlaid with racial factors, might shed light on that question.

Political scientists have written extensively on ethnic politics, but they have concentrated on its manifestation in a single type of political environment: cities where strong political parties, particularly centralized "machines," predominate.[6] In contemporary urban America, however, this is an exceptional circumstance. Some political scientists have also analyzed the importance of ethnic identification as a voting cue in nonpartisan elections.[7] Yet voting is only one form of political activity, and only those groups that are numerically dominant or near dominant in their cities are likely to benefit from such voting patterns. Researchers have not yet systematically examined how variations in political structure and other political variables affect ethnic political patterns.

In the pages that follow, we shall first analyze the basis of Cape Verdean ethnic identity. Then we shall consider the model of ethnic politics most frequently found in political science literature and suggest some modifications to reflect conditions in disorganized political systems. Finally we shall examine the behavior of the United Front to see how it could overcome some of the constraints of its social and political environment in New Bedford.

The Ambiguity of Cape Verdean Identity

The uncertain orientation of Cape Verdean political participation stems from the complex nature of their ethnic identity. As Wallerstein has suggested, ethnic identity is not a simple matter of self-perception but rather "an interplay of the self-definition of members and the definition of other groups."[8]

Self-definition itself hinges on both individual attitudes and reinforcement from within the group. While a person's feeling of sharing a common historical experience and cultural heritage with others plays an important part in his perception of group membership, it may not be a sufficient condition to sustain ethnic identification and, especially, to make that identification salient in choices of political action. Hence the development and persistence of ethnic consciousness, as three sociologists have recently pointed out, may be closely linked to structural conditions of economic and social life - "conditions which reinforce the maintenance of kinship and friendship networks. These are common occupational positions, residential stability and concentration, and dependence on common institutions and services."[9]

The attitudes of other individuals and groups in society are also likely to affect one's self-perception. Imagine two groups that themselves feel limited affinity of identity. Others, however, may link these groups in their minds and treat them similarly. Such treatment is likely to be in accord with the system of social stratification, which ranks groups as well as individuals.[10] Depending on the relative status of our hypothetical groups, they would feel incentives to affirm or deny the connection imputed by others.

Any person is likely to have multiple identities based on the numerous social roles he plays, such as family member, neighborhood resident, or labor union member. Ethnic identity must coexist and compete with these other identities for salience in a political situation.[11] When ethnic identity emerges as the basis of political action, it typically involves "a strategic choice by individuals who, in other circumstances, would choose other group membership as a means of gaining some power and privilege." Yet the potential strength of ethnic identity as a political bond is that it can combine instrumental <u>and</u> affective ties.[12]

This perspective helps us to understand the ambiguity of Cape Verdean ethnic identity. Conscious of their common geographic origins, similar historical experiences, and shared cultural traditions, they are reinforced in a Cape Verdean ethnic identity by continuing kinship ties to the Islands and by residential contiguity, similar economic and occupational status, and common social institutions in New Bedford. Many but not all of these factors, however, also tie them to the larger Portuguese community in the city. Strong incentives for maintaining the latter tie are created by the pervasive racial status distinctions in American society. To the extent that they are perceived by others as Portuguese, the Cape Verdeans avoid the stigma that Americans place on black and multi-racial groups. However, despite the cultural dissimilarities between Cape Verdeans and most black Americans, and despite their limited contact in New Bedford, Cape Verdeans have not wholly escaped being identified as black by others, especially outside of New Bedford. Some Cape Verdeans, therefore, arguing that these external social definitions are what really count, have opted for a black identity. In the national climate of black political activism in the 1960's and with the possibility of benefit from federal social programs, some Cape Verdean political activists tried to forge a local political alliance between Cape Verdeans and blacks, based on black identity.

The Cape Verdeans of New Bedford can trace their own or their forebears' geographic origins to an Atlantic archipelago of nine inhabited islands off the west coast of Africa. Settled by the Portuguese initially in the 15th century, the Cape Verde Islands are peopled by African, European, and mixed racial stock, as was quite common throughout the Portuguese empire. Beginning in the early 19th century, Cape Verdeans came to the United States, many drawn to New Bedford by the whaling industry. They often bartered their navigational expertise for passage. Others made annual round trips to work in the cranberry bogs nearby, a practice that continued until the 1920's. The first wave of major immigration ended at that time as a result of restrictive national legislation. Reform of these laws, beginning in the late 1950's, started a fresh wave of immigration. These immigrants shared, among other cultural traits, a language - Krio'lu, a creole dialect of Portuguese and African tongues- and the Roman Catholic religion.[13]

This common background is reinforced by the social and economic setting in New Bedford. The vast majority of Cape Verdeans live in the South End of the city, a circumstance that promotes close ties in complex kinship networks. In many instances, too, Cape Verdeans in New Bedford have maintained ties with relatives still on the Islands. There has been a tradition discouraging, with some exceptions, marriage outside of the group.

Occupationally, Cape Verdeans have been connected to the principal industries of southeastern Massachusetts - textiles, shoe manufacture, and fishing. But since before the Depression, when the textile firms began to move south, New Bedford has been troubled economically.[14] Unemployment tends to run at a rate significantly higher than the national average. Because of hard economic conditions, a substantial percentage of Cape Verdeans failed to complete a high school education, and, until recently, college graduates were very few. In New Bedford today Cape Verdeans have the reputation of being industrious workers and hold a range of blue- and, increasingly, white-collar jobs.

Cape Verdeans in New Bedford are linked through membership in the parish of Our Lady of the Assumption (OLOA) church, located in the heart of the South End community. The Fall River diocese, of which New Bedford is a part, is organized in parishes based on nationality rather than territory. Cape Verdeans proudly point out that OLOA is the only Cape Verdean parish in the United States, but in fact it is treated more as a mission church by the diocese. OLOA has never had a Cape Verdean priest regularly assigned to it.[15]

The community supports a large number of other voluntary assocations that play important roles in its life. The Cape Verdean Beneficent Society was founded in the late 19th century as a protective assocation, providing burial insurance and financial assistance for old age or illness. It continues to exist, although with less vigor than a generation ago. The Cape Verdean Ultramarine Band Club, an old and popular social organization, has played a vital role in the communications network of the community. The Cape Verdean Vets and its women's auxiliary sponsor educational and sports activities for youngsters, social events for adults, and an annual Memorial Day parade. Other social events are sponsored by the United Social Club and its women's auxiliary

and by groups affiliated with OLOA. The Young Cape Verdean Action Club and the Young Athletes both organize sports teams and events, while the Cape Verdean Action Committee - an elite group limited to 20 members - raises money for college scholarships.

Despite these factors tending to create a coherent Cape Verdean identity, there are others that promote a broader "Portuguese" self-conception. For hundreds of years the people of the Cape Verde Islands had close cultural, commercial, political, and often family connections with continental Portugal. Standard Portuguese was learned by all school children on the islands, since Krio'lu, varying even from island to island within the archipelago, cannot be used in the outside world.[16]

In New Bedford the dominant ethnic group numerically is the "European" Portuguese - white immigrants and their descendants from continental Portugal, the Azores, and Madeira. Unquestionably this group makes status distinctions between themselves and Cape Verdeans, but they have not denied the cultural affinities and traditional ties between the groups, including a common language. Thus, their attitudes are ambivalent. When both groups first arrived in New Bedford, their ties were recognized by the earlier immigrant groups, many of whose members scorned both the Cape Verdeans and the other Portuguese; Cape Verdeans were labeled "black Portuguese." Economically, the "European" Portuguese have been somewhat better off than Cape Verdeans. They have an emergent professional class, and a higher percentage of college and high school graduates. Given New Bedford's depressed economy, however, the difference in economic and occupational status between the groups has not been large. Many of the "European" Portuguese live in close proximity to or intermingled with the Cape Verdeans in the South End. Some intermarriage occurs, especially involving light-skinned Cape Verdeans. And there are ties between Our Lady of the Assumption church and the Portuguese national parishes, despite the fact that the original impetus for founding OLOA came in 1905 from the discomfort that these parishes felt at having Cape Verdean members.[17]

From the Cape Verdean viewpoint, however, a very strong motivation for identifying with the Portuguese was to avoid others' identifying them with the West End blacks - New Bedfordites of continental African descent who had

come to the city by way of the West Indies or the American South, or in a few cases had come to New Bedford prior to the American Revolution. There are cultural explanations for the Cape Verdeans' sense of difference: most blacks are Protestant rather than Catholic, very few speak any Portuguese, and there had been no Cape Verdean experience with slavery. But more important in maintaining the difference in New Bedford is the existence and consequences of racial discrimination in the United States. As one Cape Verdean commented to us, "When my father learned the way that blacks were treated in the U.S., he didn't want that kind of treatment for him or his family." Outside the city, Cape Verdeans were frequently treated as blacks if their skin color was dark. They might be denied service at a lunch counter in a southern state or might be assigned to Jim Crow units in the military.

In New Bedford, treatment was less consistent. Our Cape Verdean interview respondents, for example, reported a wide range of racial designations on their birth certificates. They were called Portuguese, white, Negro, Cape Verdean - on the basis of parental preference or an official's "eyeball" classification - or simply had a line drawn through the space because someone had avoided the issue. Among themselves distinctions are sometimes made according to skin color - distinctions that divide families. One respondent referred to himself as a "black" Cape Verdean and to his sister as a "white" Cape Verdean. On the whole, however, despite experiences with racial discrimination in their daily lives, Cape Verdeans in New Bedford are treated as a group separate from and of higher status than blacks.

This differentiation is reinforced by territorial and social separation. Most blacks live in the West End of the city, and there is limited social contact. An older Cape Verdean remembers some contact: "People from the South End would visit the West End, but there was no intermarriage." At that time, "we used to have a lot of dances at the Monte Pio Hall [in the South End], but none of the West End group would come." When the Ultramarine Band Club drew up a constitution after some years of operation, the document limited membership to Cape Verdeans, with the exception of one black person, specifically named, who had long been an active member. Blacks were well aware of the separation of the two groups: "County Street was the boundary - we wouldn't go South and they wouldn't come West." Indeed, when a South End youth was killed

during the racial disturbances in 1970, older Cape Verdeans asked, "What was he doing in the West End?" At times some Cape Verdeans manifested the prejudices of American society, to the bitter bemusement of West Enders. A black person who came to New Bedford 20 years ago from the South recalls, "Some Cape Verdeans called me 'nigger', and they were blacker than I was. I didn't know what was going on."

Some Cape Verdeans in New Bedford affirm a black identity, in addition to their self-conception as Cape Verdeans:

> If you're black, you're black. Cape Verdean is a nationality thing. Black is a race thing. There has been a stigma in being Negro or black, and so it makes sense that some people would want to stay away from it, if they could...I don't have any problem with my Cape Verdean heritage. I am proud of it. But I can be proud of it and be black, too.

Most Cape Verdeans who express positive sentiments about black identity are today no older than 35. They seem to have been heavily influenced by the civil rights movement, especially during its most successful years in the 1960's.

Yet these feelings represent a minority position among Cape Verdeans in New Bedford. There is some fear of losing their sense of distinctiveness, even if tentatively they have accepted black identity: "Blackness doesn't bother me now, but I don't want to be black if I have to lose my Cape Verdeaness." Others resist an alternative identity altogether: "There are Cape Verdeans who just want to be Cape Verdean." In the community as a whole, there is ambivalence and uncertainty. Some of our respondents reported that they had "been" Portuguese, white, Cape Verdean, and black at various points in their lifetimes.

The Consequences of Unorganized Politics

Social scientists have developed an analytical model of ethnic politics as it occurs where strong political parties, particularly centralized political machines, predominate.[18] This model is quite useful in explaining not only electoral politics but also the distribution of political benefits and the relationships among activists in the ethnic community. Yet there is no question that centralized machines are rare today - for reasons frequently noted - and vigorous local party organization of any kind is becoming less common. The model of ethnic politics is less useful, even misleading, for understanding the patterns found in "unorganized" political systems. It is true that some political scientists have pointed out the crucial role of ethnic identity as a cue for voters in nonpartisan elections (when parties are actually inactive).[19] But this observation does not constitute a complete model of ethnic politics in unorganized systems. It concerns only the voting behavior of individuals belonging to one or another ethnic group, usually the dominant groups in a ward or community. In this section we shall review the model of ethnic politics most frequently found in the literature. Then, based on our study of New Bedford, we shall suggest how ethnic politics in an unorganized system seems to differ.

Where strong political parties exist, social scientists have found ethnic politics characterized by stable patterns of resource exchange through political brokers. Both sides possess resources valued by the other. The ethnic community can bargain at least with its votes, and sometimes, when a middle class and entrepreneurial cadre has begun to emerge, with other resources, including cash. For its part, the party organization can provide a range of incentives to members of the ethnic community. Most frequently noted are divisible material benefits (jobs, discretionary actions by government agencies); small-scale, collective, material benefits (improved street maintenance and garbage collection, construction of neighborhood public facilities like schools or playgrounds);

selective solidary incentives (the friendship of a precinct captain, the selection of a community influential for an honorific position); and collective solidary incentives ("recognition" of ethnic heroes or holidays, nomination of ethnic group members to public office).[19a] Less frequently noted, the party offers political power, usually restricted in scope, including, for example, veto power over introduction of low income housing into an ethnic neighborhood.[20]

Exchange of these resources is negotiated by political brokers. In some instances, the broker is a ward leader or other party official (who may or may not be a member of the ethnic group).[21] The broker might also be an ethnic group member who already has standing in the community through his leadership of a significant community institution (such as a church) or a social organization. In this case he enhances his influence by serving the party but retains an independent base of power in the community.[22] When the party organization is centralized and the broker has significant independent standing in the ethnic community (and is therefore not easily replaceable by the party), the broker can become a "buffer". By monopolizing communication and bargaining channels between the party and the ethnic community, by making himself an essential intermediary, he greatly increases his political power.[23]

When a political machine exists, independent ethnic political organizations are unlikely to emerge. The machine tends to monopolize political resources and to limit points of access to government. Ethnic, organizations, unless they can secure resources not under party control, are likely to be nonpolitical or dependent on the party.[24] Should an independent organization arise, the ethnic broker is likely to regard it as an enemy - it threatens established patterns of resource exchange - and to work to destroy it.[25]

When a strong political party exists, patterns of ethnic bargaining tend to be fairly stable. The ethnic electorate may develop a persistent identification with the party.[26] Among activists, both sides form expectations about the other's reliability and develop norms regulating resource exchange. Individual activists can make long-range career plans on the basis of perceived political opportunities. Such arrangements tend to become institutionalized, persisting when party leaders or public officials change, and surviving even a change in the identity of the ethnic political broker.[27]

One need not have a romantic image of the benevolent ward leader or overestimate the quite limited redistributive potential of machine politics to recognize that even an ethnic group composing a small voting bloc can hope for some benefits and political power under these circumstances of ethnic political bargaining. It is surely true that political machines have resisted ethnic succession to positions of organizational influence.[28] It is also the case that party leaders make "irrational" allocations of organizational resources, among other reasons because of racial discrimination.[29] And it is probably true that machine politics exhibits a systematic bias against certain kinds of political demands and resists having some types of issues reach the public agenda.[30] Nonetheless, when elections are competitive, there is a compelling logic of organizational maintenance: apportion political incentives roughly according to a group's voting strength.

Our empirical research shows, however, that the structure of politics in New Bedford is not conducive to this pattern of stable ethnic political bargaining. The more important contrasts can be analyzed in terms of political organization, incentives, brokers, independent organizations, voting alignments, and political power.

(1) Political Organization. In New Bedford there is no machine to centralize control over political resources and to be a focal point for bargaining with the ethnic community. As in most communities in Massachusetts, political organization of any kind is weak and quite fluid, even in partisan campaigns for the state legislature or Congress. Municipal elections are nonpartisan in fact as well as in form; there is no involvement by party organizations. Nor do other large citywide organizations - such as business associations or labor - take a regular role in recruiting and promoting candidates for municipal office. For candidates, therefore, these conditions produce expectations different from what they would be in the presence of strong political organization. They cannot depend on a stable source of electoral resources (campaign workers, money, publicity, an electoral base of party identifiers). Instead, they must assemble ad hoc personal followings composed of politically active individuals; and they must seek support from many small organizations, including those that are only marginally involved in politics, like social clubs and neighborhood associations.

A candidate's personal followers are bound to each other by no broader collective purpose than advancement of the candidate's political career. Since they are bound to him individually through diverse incentives - friendship, hope for gain, shared political principle - rather than linked to each other by continuing organizational involvement and discipline, as they would be in a strong political party, personal followers cannot easily be induced to work together for another politician.[31] In turn, a politician is likely to feel gratitude only toward his own active followers, although he may be motivated to broaden his base of support if he feels it is too narrow or unstable. Under these circumstances a politician tends to regard other politicians as competitors, even when they are unlikely to be opponents in an election. There is no organizational "glue" that links their political fortunes, and therefore there is no incentive for them systematically to coordinate their actions in office.

Most politicians have difficulty developing large followings willing to do active campaign work. Even the more successful candidates running for major citywide offices are likely to enlist the support of only a few hundred followers. More typically, a candidate has a few score supporters. One deviant case illustrates well the weakness of political organization in New Bedford. George Rogers - who has held office as state representative, mayor, and state senator - maintains the most highly organized following in recent New Bedford history. Rogers Associates is a combination of political and social club, which had about 1100 members at its peak, when Rogers was running for mayor. For most, the demands of membership are modest: during a campaign, one is expected to contact one's family and close friends on Rogers' behalf and perhaps to make a small financial contribution. Benefits are equally modest for most: Rogers annually hosts a New Year's Eve party and a celebration of his birthday in August. Members share these occasions as well as a sense of involvement in Rogers' political career. A few followers can be rewarded with more substantive benefits, but, as will be explained, there are not enough resources available to spread these benefits widely. Because of its weak incentives, Rogers Associates has only a limited capacity for voter convassing even for Rogers himself; it does not regularly work for other candidates. And since he cannot systematically offer help to other candidates, Rogers cannot transform his following into an organization with influence over officeholders' actions.

(2) Incentives. Perhaps the best explanation for the weakness of political organization in New Bedford is the scarcity of incentives to induce and discipline participation. Compared to machine cities, there are relatively few specific or collective material benefits that can be distributed at the discretion of officeholders - and almost all of that is controlled by the mayor. The city charter creates a strong mayor system, giving that official effective control of the budget, unconstrained power of appointment for department commissioners, and chairmanship of the school committee. The city council, with few bits of authority, infrequently checks the mayor. Nonetheless, despite his pre-eminence among elected officials, the mayor is constrained in distributing material benefits. There is a rigid civil service system which limits him

to one appointment in most municipal departments. No - bid contracts are restricted to small items. While he has some room for maneuver in these matters, the mayor does not enjoy the resources that mayors in some cities do.[32] And because the city relies on revenues from the politically sensitive property tax, the mayor cannot press for broad expansion of government services which might generate specific material benefits. Many of these same factors also limit the supply of small-scale collective material benefits like improved service distribution for a particular neighborhood. City councilmen have little leverage over municipal bureaucracies; and, while the mayor has more, even he is limited by his small staff and the presence of few responsive personnel in city departments.

Officeholders can provide certain collective solidary incentives to elements of the electorate, including ethnic communities. They can attend social gatherings of ethnic associations, share ethnic holidays, or honor ethnic heroes. The mayor, in addition, can select an ethnic group member for a high city job or name him to an honorary position; such appointments may please fellow ethnics. Yet the most important form of "recognition" - support for an ethnic candidate for public office - is difficult to provide. Given the unorganized electoral system, no person or organization can "slate" an ethnic candidate and throw significant campaign support behind him. There is no party banner in which to cloak an ethnic candidate so that the party faithful will rally to his cause. Since all school committee members and five of eleven councilmen are elected at-large, an ethnic group member cannot usually hope for a constituency in which his fellow ethnics are geographically concentrated.

(3) Brokers. Ethnic political brokers emerge in New Bedford, mediating between officials and the group; but they are unable to become "buffers," monopolizing resource exchange. Typically, a broker has played an important campaign role in an official's personal following: he may have activated a large network of family and friends, or he may have given the candidate access to an important organization in the ethnic community. When the winning candidate takes office, he will regard his follower as "his" man in the community, a continuing contact whose counsel is sought in distributing benefits. But such a broker is unlikely to transform this role into the "buffer" role found in machine cities. First,

there are likely to be other persons operating as brokers for other politicians, and these are more likely to be competitors than allies of the broker. Even if a broker becomes the mayor's representative, he is confronted by the fluidity of political alignments in New Bedford. Eventually, his patron will retire or be defeated. If he has "bet on the wrong horse" in an election, then the winner has little reason to deal with him, unless the winner has no contact in the ethnic community. More likely, however, the successful candidate will seek to supplant the former broker with a person whose loyalty is unquestioned.

(4) Independent Organizations. If a politician believes that he can draw votes from the ethnic community, he seeks to enlist the active political support of independent organizations there, even if these groups have little connection with electoral politics. Given the likely weakness of his personal following, the politician wants to appropriate other organizational networks that will help him reach voters. This orientation encourages ethnic associations to involve themselves in politics, but there are other forces simultaneously discouraging them from involvement. Because government authority is quite highly centralized in the mayor's office, other politicians lack incentives powerful enough to motivate energetic participation by ethnic associations. Even the mayor has limited resources, as explained above, so he is more likely to succeed in enlisting support from individuals than from organizations as a whole.[33] Moreover, to the extent than an association becomes closely identified with a particular politician, it risks the same problems that a broker encounters when his patron retires or loses an election.

(5) Voting Alignments. Because there are no party identifications to channel loyalties, because political alliances among activists are unstable, and because it is difficult for specific brokers or organizations to achieve political preeminence, there tend to be no undisputed opinion leaders or stable patterns of voting in nonpartisan municipal elections in New Bedford. Ethnic voters may consistently and overwhelmingly support a candidate who has courted them. But their support for other candidates is likely to be fragmented. The ethnic community does not emerge as a stable and cohesive voting bloc.

(6) Political Power. The influence of the ethnic community as a whole, and of specific organizations in it, is contingent on its ephemeral alliances with individual politicians, especially the mayor. A small group like the Cape Verdeans, however, lacks strategic import, a situation exacerbated by its inability to vote as a bloc. It seems doomed to political weakness by a vicious cycle. Unless the ethnic community can organize itself politically, it will not be consistently wooed as an ally by politicians. Yet such organization seems to require a flow of political incentives that would make ethnic identity a salient factor in political choice.

To summarize, the lack of continuing political organization in New Bedford, resulting in large part from the scarcity of political incentives in the system, creates patterns of ethnic politics quite different in important respects from those in machine cities. Political brokers encounter difficulty in establishing long-term influence and usually cannot achieve a position as a "buffer." Independent ethnic organizations are encouraged to take a role in politics, not undermined in that effort; yet there are few incentives for them to work hard. Voting alignments in the ethnic community are fragmented and unstable. As a result, a small ethnic community enjoys influence only when individuals or organizations form alliances with specific officeholders, especially the mayor.

Under these general circumstances, therefore, what kinds of political activity are prevalent in the Cape Verdean Community?

Individual Cape Verdeans have often been active in political campaign in New Bedford. Frequently these have been persons with connections to the more popular social and fraternal associations in the community. They have used their contacts to promote favored candidates and in return have reaped rewards of recognition and status among Cape Verdeans or patronage in the city government. The Ultramarine Band Club and the Cape Verdean Vets, for example, have traditionally had politically active members.

Aggressive politicians have sought support from newer groups. George Rogers, for example, during his first campaign for state representative, sought support from the Young Athletes. This group sponsored sports teams for its 60 members, who were mostly in their 20's. Many of the Young Athletes canvassed door-to-door for Rogers and ran coffee hours in his behalf. Edward Harrington, first a councilman and then mayor for eight years, sought close ties with Cape Verdeans. His brother Joe was councilman for the fourth ward, where most Cape Verdeans live, during Harrington's years as mayor. Mayor Harrington frequently attended social occasions at Cape Verdean organizations. He was particularly close to the Cape Verdean Action Committee, an elite group limited to 20 members dedicated to raising money for college scholarships. The group formed during Harrington's tenure as mayor, and a number of its members were appointed to positions in his administration. Harrington himself was named an honorary member. This mayor's ties to the Cape Verdean community will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Cape Verdeans themselves have had little luck running for political office. To some extent this may result from the relatively recent accession of significant numbers of Cape Verdeans to the middle class, as Wolfinger argues.[34] But there can be no question that the political structure of the city has also had an effect. Since all school committee positions and five of eleven council seats are elected at-large, Cape Verdean candidates have been forced to attempt citywide campaigns - which have inevitably resulted in failure - or to contend for the fourth ward council seat or a state legislative seat encompassing most of the fourth ward plus pieces of three others. Cape Verdeans, whose rates of voting registration and turnout compare favorably with any other group in New Bedford, comprise only about 35 percent of the voters in the legislative district. The single success has been Thomas Lopes, who won the legislative seat in 1974. A native of New Bedford, who received a collece degree from the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut, Lopes worked in Connecticut for several years until he returned to the city as deputy director of the Community Action Program in 1968. Beginning the following year, he ran unsucessfully for the school committee four times. With limited compaign funds and no more than a dozen active workers, his campaigns were doomed at the citywide level. However, they helped to make his name known among voters, especially in his home area. Several mayors appointed him to task forces, and he was named by the bishop to the diocessan

school board. In 1974, Lopes won the Democratic legislative primary - tantamount to general election victory - against two white, non-Portuguese opponents. Helped by split opposition and, Lopes believes, the support of Portuguese voters as well as Cape Verdeans, Lopes won by a plurality. But his victory came by playing down his Cape Verdean identity and shying away from a black identity. He specifically pledged not to join the Black Caucus in the legislature.

The United Front: Explaining a Deviant Case

The formation of the United Front and its initial choice of tactics represented clear departures from the usual patterns of local politics in New Bedford. It was unusual for any organization based on ethnic identity to proclaim explicit political objectives and to pursue them through protest tactics. With creation of the United Front, moreover, at least some Cape Verdeans overcame their reluctance to form political alliances with West Enders; in fact, they proclaimed unity as black Americans with the West Enders.

How can we explain the creation of the United Front? What accounts for its selection of organizational tactics and the changes that occurred in them over time? What effects did these have on United Front leadership structure and on the attractiveness of the organization to members? In examining the United Front's behavior, we can identify factors that seem to account for its novel actions. Yet it is striking to note that these factors were only temporary disturbances in the normal patterns of politics in New Bedford. When circumstances began to change relatively early in the life of the United Front, more traditional patterns were reasserted. In response, the United Front was forced to alter its tactics and, ultimately, to change its organizational structure.

(1) Organizational formation. A substantial number of the leaders who created the United Front were persons who had taken part in the welter of federal programs that had sprung up in the 1960s, such as On Board (the anti-poverty agency), the Model Cities program, and the Job Corps. Looking back, many Cape Verdean political activists trace their involvement in community affairs to experiences in these programs. As one person recalls, the programs

> enabled some of us to understand the structure. We learned how to deal with people and officials. We intermingled .... The 60's gave the Cape Verdeans a key into the municipal

> government. It gave us an opportunity to participate. If it weren't for the 60's, we'd still be on the outside looking in. It enabled the Cape Verdeans to take a good look at themselves and develop some expertise. The Cape Verdeans were able to deal with people on a higher level.... You can't take the kind of education we received away from us.

Federal programs had had two other effects on some Cape Verdeans. First, Cape Verdeans began to establish contact with and learn the internal structure of the West End black community. Second, they perceived how the national black movement had been connected with the benefits coming from the federal government.

In the middle 1960's, school affairs gave further impetus to development of ties between black activists in the West End and Cape Verdeans in the South End. Special state aid programs for education were allocated according to a formula partially based on the population of minority students. Data on the number of minority students in the system was obtained through a school census. But the parents of Cape Verdean children frequently wrote "white" or "Portuguese" in the space on the questionnaire for race. In 1966 parents in both the South and West Ends, concerned that state funds were being lost, brought a class action suit with NAACP support. The courts decided that the principal of each school should take a racial count based on "eyeball" classification. Another dispute concerned construction of a new elementary school in the South End, an issue that became entangled with the issue of racial inbalance in city schools. On both of these controversies, Cape Verdeans shared concerns with West Enders.

At roughly the same time there were several incidents in the South End in which Cape Verdean youths, dressed Afro style, were allegedly harassed by police officers. These incidents suggested other common interests with the West End community.

The origins of the United Front can be traced to late 1967 and early 1968, when a dissident faction in the NAACP chapter in New Bedford began to despair of that organization taking an aggressive stand on the range of issues confronting the minority communities. The group consisted primarily of West Enders, including several NAACP leaders, and a few Cape Verdeans, who did not constitute a high percentage of NAACP membership. The West Enders among the dissidents believed that the success of any alternative organization depended on the active involvement of Cape Verdeans, who outnumber the West End blacks in New Bedford nearly two to one.

The NAACP dissidents and some unaffiliated sympathizers, including Cape Verdeans, began meeting as "black caucus" to discuss alternative strategies. Their discussions were inconclusive until the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., in late April 1968, created a sense of crisis in New Bedford, as elsewhere. Spurred by this event, the activists held an open meeting of the "black caucus," attended by a number of young adults from the Cape Verdean community, including a number of the Young Athletes. From this meeting emerged the United Front - a group united around a sense of black identity. It was decided to invite the mayor to a mass meeting where he could hear the minority community's grievances. Subcommittees were appointed to formulate specific demands in about a half dozen policy areas. Less than a week later, Mayor Harrington came to the meeting, held in the basement of a Protestant church in the West End, to hear the United Front's demands.

This sequence of events can be understood in terms of theories of organizational creation. Wilson has argued[35] that formation of an organization depends on the availability of associational entrepreneurs,[36] and a commonly perceived problem that potential members believe can be solved by a target institution. Wilson also suggests that the chances of an organization emerging are enhanced if it can draw on existing networks of social relations.[37] In both the West and South End communities of New Bedford there existed cadres of potential associational entrepreneurs, influenced by the civil rights movement, trained

and nurtured by the Great Society programs of the 1960s, and oriented toward political activity. A series of issues related to the schools and to police-community relations sensitized these leaders to the possibilities of joint action. Yet the circumstances of New Bedford politics raised serious questions about the potential viability of a new organization that would try to change the behavior of the municipal government. It took the shock of King's murder - and the fear of rioting generated in the white community - to make the immediate prospects of success seem brighter. When the United Front did form, it could use some of the organizational networks of the South End, such as the Young Athletes, to recruit Cape Verdean members.

(2) Tactics. In its early days the United Front relied heavily on protest. Presentation of the 80 demands to Mayor Harrington was staged in the West End to maximize turnout at the mass meeting - several hundred people attended - and to place the mayor on the defensive. "It was important," an organizer asserts, "that we had him come down to our turf." Forewarned of the contents of the demands by an informant in the organization, Mayor Harrington came prepared to answer them. But the group hotly refused to permit him to do that, insisting that he reflect on them. Two weeks later, when the mayor had not satisfied the group, the United Front led a protest march of 250 persons to City Hall to argue for swift action on the demands. A second march was held later for the same purpose. These were the first protest marches held in New Bedford within the memories of observers.

Protest was also employed in dealing with the school committee. When the committee refused to accept a proposal by the United Front to rename a West End school after a black military hero from New Bedford, the Front demanded another vote and eventually won its point. The United Front also sought changes in pupil transfer policies and in the school dress code, which barred Afro hairstyles.

During this period the group frequently used the "yellers and doers" technique of persuading officials to respond. One member of the group drew attention to an issue by overblown rhetoric or threats - amply covered in the press - while another member with a more moderate reputation approached the relevant officials to urge their cooperation with the less extreme elements of the group.

Yet the protest activities of the United Front began to fade in importance within a few months of its formation and had virtually disappeared by the end of its second year. Among the reasons were, first, the difficulty of mounting pressure on officials from outside the minority community and, second, the problem of maintaining an organizational following.

Lipsky has argued that protest is an effective tactic not because of the influence of the relatively few protesters but because of their success in activating otherwise uninvolved "reference publics" of officials.[38] In the early period of the United Front's existence, there is evidence that this occurred to some extent. Our interview respondents spoke of a loosely organized White United Front, composed mainly of white liberal professionals - including several lawyers, the president of the city's largest corporation, and the publisher of its only daily newspaper - who provided legal advice and made supportive statements to the press. On the day that the 80 demands were reported in the newspaper, for example, the Standard-Times also ran a favorable editorial. However, while support from prominent citizens was useful in dealing with the mayor, it was not broad-based. Many rank and file white voters were unhappy with the militance of the United Front. It is probable that more negative than positive feelings were aroused by the protests. For example, the United Front strongly supported plans by the mayor to construct low income housing on a site in the South End made available through the federal surplus land program. About 1000 community residents, both Cape Verdean and others, turned out at a public meeting to insist on single-family houses for the site. A United Front charge of "bigotry and bias" angered the crowd. When the city council refused to back his plan, the mayor was forced to abandon it.[39]

Lipsky has also pointed out how unstable the followings of protest organizations tend to be, [40] and this fact plagued the United Front. While at the outset, the group had a core of about 40 active members and attracted between 75 to 125 to meetings, this support began to dissipate within a few months, slowly draining the ability of the organization to mobilize protest actions.

Dramatic concessions were not forthcoming from the city administration as a result of the 80 demands, although some gains were registered. Given the scarcity of incentives in the political system, the United Front's leaders were unable to maintain a large following. Since the extraordinary circumstances of Dr. King's murder had been so crucial in launching the organization - providing purposive incentives to members - it was difficult for the leaders to sustain these incentives or find substitutes.

Despite these constraints on tne success of protest tactics, it is possible that the leaders would have been forced to continue on their course - with a shrinking organization condemned to ineffectiveness or extinction - if an alternative tactic had not been available. In fact, however, the United Front was able to enter a direct bargaining relationship with Mayor Edward F. Harrington.

Harrington, elected to his first two-year term as mayor in 1961, was beginning his fourth term when the United Front formed. Energetic and politically ambitious - he ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1960 and 1966 - Harrington had built his administration around sixty - odd federal and state programs, many of which he had personally secured for New Bedford through initiative unusual for the mayor of a medium-size city. Despite the limitations imposed by New Bedford's governmental system, Harrington had "pyramided" his political resources to increase his influence.[41] Federal officials regarded him as a capable, effective, and resourceful administrator, a fact that no doubt helped him secure so many discretionary "project" grants.[42] Harrington had been re-elected three times by sizable margins.

The mayor had enjoyed close ties to the Cape Verdean community. In his law practice, he had often represented Cape Verdeans. His brother was the councilman for the fourth ward, where most Cape Verdeans lived, during his entire tenure as mayor. The mayor often attended Cape Verdean social functions, he had appointed Cape Verdeans to responsible positions in various

federal programs, and his executive secretary was a Cape Verdean. An elite organization, the Cape Verdean Action Committee, to which several members of his administration belonged, had made Harrington an honorary member.

Fairly soon after the 80 demands had been presented to him, Harrington began meeting with the leaders of the United Front. These meetings occurred regularly on Sunday mornings in Harrington's office. Quite informal - "We'd break out a bottle" - these gatherings built personal relationships between the mayor and the United Front leaders. Sometimes heated arguments erupted. Harrington admitted that many of the demands were well-founded but felt that some were not; and he believed that many of the solutions proposed by the United Front were impossible to implement. "For instance, when they asked for a black member of the school committee, they didn't realize that the school committee is elected and the mayor has no appointive power there." Harrington also felt constrained by other elements of his constituency. He therefore suggested tactics to the United Front leaders that they could use in dealing with him in public. As one leader recalls, "He would say, 'If you ask me like this, I'll have to say no. But if you ask me like that, I'll be able to say yes or maybe.'"

Action on the demands was slow, nonetheless. Certain demands could be handled without great difficulty - for example, "that the Vocational High School playground be opened to the residents of the Black Community." Others were feasible but required careful preparatory work, both political and bureaucratic. In this category one might include "That contracts for street repairs, garbage collection and maintenance in the Black Community go to Black Contractors if available." Still others posed more difficult problems for the mayor: "That the mayor ask the police department to return all rioting equipment as a token of good will, and that the money be used toward bettering minority areas."[43] The United Front leaders recognized that certain requests would never be realized but insisted on them anyway to enhance their bargaining position on other demands.

With Harrington's help, the United Front was able to pressure city bureaucracies to change their behavior. Harrington ordered his commissioners to cooperate with the United Front by appearing at one of its meetings to discuss the demands. There an official would be questioned by the subcommittee concerned with his policies. "We called it the 'hot seat,'" recalls a Front leader. This procedure probably also increased Harrington's leverage over his administration.

The United Front was most successful in its demand that the mayor fill appointive positions in city government with minority group members. It kept track of prospective appointments to the Housing Authority board or the Vocational High School trustees, for example. When an opening developed, the Front leaders campaigned for their own nominee. Often Harrington agreed, and often the appointee was a member of the Front.

Harrington's responsiveness to the United Front can be accounted for by several factors. He was personally sympathetic to the group's goals and perceived himself politically as a liberal. He also considered the minority community - and Cape Verdeans, in particular - as part of his electoral coalition. Any organization, therefore, was far better as a potential ally than as an enemy. But two other factors seem more compelling. First, Harrington had built his administration's reputation on his success in securing federal and state grants. To maintain his standing with federal bureaucrats, to continue to merit their confidence when they made discretionary decisions on grant applications, he needed visibly good relations with the minority communities. Second, he feared that tension would build up in these communities and spark a riot like the ones that had erupted around the country since 1964. A riot would polarize his constituency, ruin his reputation as an effective mayor, and damage his chances for re-election.

What is striking about these motivations is that they were peculiar both to Harrington's personal sense of what constituted desirable political action and to his career interests as a politician. They were not related to an institutional imperative to maintain a political organization. In that sense,

they were characteristic of New Bedford politics as we have described it. The importance of that fact for the maintenance of a political association. like the United Front can be understood by analyzing what happened after Harrington left office.

In 1969, Harrington chose not to run again for mayor. That decision was motivated in part by personal factors, by the unevitability of major tax increases, and perhaps by apprehension that the minority community would not remain quiescent. He did not give up his political career, however, as evidenced by a campaign for mayor in 1971.

His successor was George Rogers, a state representative and the first person of Portuguese heritage to be mayor of New Bedford. Rogers was elected mayor through the efforts of his own following, the Rogers Associates described above. Through its members, he had channels of access to the Cape Verdean community that did not depend on the United Front. Although his political philosophy was similar to Harrington's he was less inclined to private bargaining than his predecessor. He was proud that he did not say one thing in private and another in public. He was, however, interested in or able to build as close a relationship with the United Front as Harrington had - a fact reflected by the following comments: "Rogers was ok, but not like Ed." "Rogers kept a distance." "Ed knew how to play the game, but Rogers couldn't satisfy anybody. Even if Ed just satisfied one side, but Rogers would leave everybody unhappy."

This distance was increased before Rogers' first year in office was over. In August 1970 New Bedford experienced the riot that Harrington had feared. Over a period of several days, buildings were burned and looted, streets were barricaded, and a Cape Verdean youth was killed by young whites. The disturbances were confined to the West End, but many Cape Verdeans were involved as a result of the killing. United Front leaders were active in trying to curb the violence, going into the streets to keep police and whites, on one side, from becoming physically engaged with blacks, on the other. The minority

communities did not blame Rogers for the riot, but they were unhappy with his response. One incident particularly rankled. Police riot troops were called out while a "peace" meeting between Rogers and minority leaders was taking place at City Hall. The mayor and chief of police both denied issuing the order. Because the chief is responsible to the mayor, some minority leaders felt that they were left with two possible explanations: "Either the mayor was lying or wasn't in control of the chief." In any case, it is clear that the riot tended to polarize political feeling in New Bedford along racial lines.

The United Front's influence waned during the Rogers' Administration. The organization had a different electoral relationship with the mayor, compared to the Harrington period; the Nixon Administration had changed the nature of incentives emanating from Washington by reducing the flow of new grant programs; and the irot made political bargaining more difficult. The situation became even less satisfictory, from the United Front's perspective, after the next mayoral election in 1971. Rogers was challenged by Harrington and John Markey, a more conservative political newcomer. Harrington ran third in the nonpartisan preliminary election, thereby failing to make the final contest. In that election, Markey defeated Rogers handily. Mayor Markey was less interested in social programs than either Harrington or Rogers and not interested in any special relationship with the United Front. He appointed fewer minority group members to high office than his predecessors. New Bedford's voters have re-elected him twice, and he serves today.

Deteriorating ties with the mayor's office made the United Front seek alternative tactics to gain political influence. One possibility was electoral politics - a vehicle for acquiring a following and a position to articulate political objectives. When Joe Harrington retired from the council in 1969, as his brother was stepping down from the mayoralty, the United Front decided to put forward a candidate for the fourth ward council seat. Donald Gomes, chairman of the Front since early 1969, became a candidate. Despite the best

campaign effort that his organization could muster, Gomes ran third in a field of five in the preliminary. He has run three more times, twice getting into the final election, but has been unable to win. Cape Verdeans and blacks constitute no more than 35 percent of the ward's voters - a figure probably reduced by urban renewal and the devastation of the riot. Whites appear unwilling to vote for a council candidate who so openly advocates minority interests. But a significant percentage of Cape Verdeans have also failed to support Gomes. Complains one United Front leader, "The Cape Verdeans are white in the ballot box."

Given the United Front's reduced influence with the mayor after Rogers took office, given its inability to effectively participate in electoral politics, the organization increasingly concentrated on a new policy - as manager and developer of low income housing. The United Front began these activities in the aftermath of the 1970 riot, and, as its other endeavors failed, housing became its prime concern.

After the riot a new organization formed in New Bedford: The Urban Coalition, affiliated with the national group. Businessmen located near the riot area, fearing further property loss, joined with minority group leaders to seek solutions to minority problems. The Urban Coalition was shortlived, falling apart because of internal dissension, but it did provide the United Front with the means to begin a housing program. Businessmen gave the United Front seed money to attract federal housing grants. Several banks were also willing to write mortgages.

After the riot, vast areas of the West End were razed. In a city where no new public or low income housing had been built in decades - a city which had already lost many low income units fron urban renewal and highway construction - the need for new housing was critical. To launch its housing program, the United Front created a nonprofit organization, the United Front Development Corporation, of which Gomes became president. At first the United Front attempted to manage scattered site housing. But it discovered that re-

habilitating old houses was a difficult proposition. Tenant abuse of property was a severe problem, and too few members of the United Front took the time to help supervise the tenants. Eventually the New Bedford Housing Authority took over these buildings.

As an alternative, the United Front Development Corporation decided to construct new apartment buildings. With funds from the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency, it constructed a 200-unit complex that includes a day care center. Operation of these units has been largely successful, although the Corporation has recently become embroiled in a dispute with its tenant association over participation in management of the project.

However, the organizational resources necessary to arrange financing, oversee construction, and manage this apartment complex drained the resources going into the United Front as a political association. While a corps of former leaders remains involved in the housing project - a not insignificant endeavor - the old United Front has disappeared.

(3) Organizational Structure and Membership. As the United Front adjusted its tactics to the reassertion of traditional patterns of politics in New Bedford, the structure of its leadership and the composition of its membership also changed.

At the outset, the leadership of the United Front reflected the composition of the dissident NAACP faction that had initiated the organization. This group consisted of West End blacks and a few Cape Verdeans, nearly all of whom were in their 40's and 50's and had been active for years in the civil rights movement. Because the members of the organization were predominantly Cape Verdeans in their 20's and 30's, there was tension within the group over the legitimacy of its leadership.

Initially, the leaders formed a steering committee of seven to ten members with no permanent chairman. Each member seems to have played a specialized role. One was the "strong arm," in charge of marches and other mass activities.

Another was the "tone-setter," the coordinator of public statements who assured consistent organizational positions. One was the "showcaser," who dealt with the white community. One was in charge of coordinating United Front activities with other activity in the black and Cape Verdean communities. And still another was in charge of weeding out "undesirable" members of the United Front whose background or actions might cause the organization enbarrassment.

A separate subcommittee structure also existed. Members who were particularly interested in one policy area - education or employment, for example - joined together first to write the demands presented to the mayor and then to work toward their implementation.

The steering committee did not direct work of the subcommittees, and there was tension between the younger Cape Verdeans who emerged as subcommittee leaders and the older steering committee members. Thelack of a permanent chairman resulted in part from a desire to shield any individual from potential sanctions by the white community and to spread out credit in the minority communities for the United Front's achievements. but there was also fear that leaders might be coopted. If there were no chairman, "the white power structure couldn't undermine the black leadership." Since the pattern of New Bedford politics was for individuals, not organizations, to establish ties to politicians, the fear of cooptation was widespread.

Within six months, the leadership of the United Front changed substantially. The older generation - Cape Verdeans as well as West Enders - began to drift away, disenchanted by membership suspicions. A new group, mostly Cape Verdeans in their 20's and early 30's but including some West Enders, achieved visibility by their work on the subcommittees and moved onto the steering committee.

In its early stages, the United Front stressed "blackness" in all public statements and internal rhetoric. The King assassination had stimulated the organizations' formation, and the "black power" movement was peaking nationally. This orientation seemed effective in overcoming some Cape Verdeans' reluctance

to identify themselves as black. Most of the 100-200 members attracted to the United Front were Cape Verdeans. While these people represented only a tiny fraction of the Cape Verdeans in New Bedford, there were signs of more widespread acceptance. Another organization, the CVP (which stood either for Community Ventures Project or Cape Verdeans for Progress), was started at about the same time. It openly opposed many of the United Front's positions, but the CVP quickly folded from lack of support. The United Front, it appears, attracted almost 200 members and did not arouse sufficient hostility among other Cape Verdeans to produce any serious counterorganization.

The gradual abandonment of protest activities, however, stemmed in part from the declining attractiveness of the organization to Cape Verdeans. This was caused by the declining salience of purposive incentives and the failure to supply material incentives. When the dramatic impact of the King assassination had dissipated, when protest brought no sweeping changes in government performance, Cape Verdeans began to question the utility of the United Front's symbolic commitments. "The more black the United Front became," laments one of its Cape Verdean activists, "the less certain Cape Verdeans could identify with it." This had been true from the beginning for the older generation, who had been willing to admire United Front achievements but not to join. Increasingly, it became true of younger people as well.

But protests declined in importance, too, because the political structure was not responsive to them. When the United Front began to change its tactics, a new group sprang up in the West End. The Black Brothers - loosely patterned after the National Black Panthers - aimed militant protests at the school committee while it publicly decried the United Front's "softness." However, the Black Brother won more newspaper attention than either members or victories on school policy. Bending to the same forces that had affected the United Front the Black Brothers disbanded - and some of its members joined the United Front.

When the United Front initiated direct bargaining with Mayor Harrington, it found it useful to alter its leadership structure. To negotiate effectively with the mayor, the group needed permanent leaders who could establish personal relationships with the mayor and who had the authority to commit the organization. As a result, a slate of permanent officers was elected, and a more hierarchial structure emerged.

The change in organizational tactics, however, exacerbated members' suspicions of the leadership. Members suspected that secret and informal meetings with the mayor - and a few with US Senators Kennedy and Brooke - might result in clandestine tradeoffs with these officials for the sole benefit of the leaders. When Mayor Harrington began to appoint United Front leaders to city positions, the suspicions intensified. The very acts committed by leaders to improve the chances of achieving organizational goals magnified internal divisions. Even some of the leaders were concerned. One recalls: "I was the only vocal black who didn't get a job in the poverty program. I was offered plenty, but I never took one. You see what happened is that they took the jobs and then they got all tied up." In consequence, more members of the United Front drifted away.

When Harrington left office, the ability of the United Front's leaders to supply incentives to members almost disappeared. The government structure of New Bedford gives most power to the mayor. Having no relationship with that official, the United Front lost its ability to be a broker for the minority communities.

While the creation of the United Front Development Corporation enabled the organization to maintain itself, the new arrangement provides incentives for a relatively small group of persons, mainly those who emerged as second generation leaders of the United Front from the work of the initial subcommittees. The days when the United Front could induce Cape Verdeans to proclaim a black identity or could function effectively as a political association are over.

Conclusions

Ethnic identity is only one of the multiple identities that the web of social roles in modern life provides for an individual. It must therefore coexist and compete for salience in a political situation with these other identities. We have been concerned with understanding the circumstances under which ethnicity becomes the basis for political action in contemporary urban America.

Students of American urban politics have written extensively about ethnic political organization but mainly about a setting where strong political parties predominate. Their writings have not adequately taken account of theoretical and empirical studies of ethnic identity and ethnic political behavior in other countries. Many of these latter studies have noted the potential variability of an individual's ethnic identity and have examined social, economic, and political patterns as intervening variables in the formation and behavioral expression of ethnic identity.

Our study of Cape Verdeans in New Bedford has considered a group whose sense of identity is ambiguous. Conscious of their common geographic origins, similar historical experiences, and shared cultural traditions, they are reinforced in a Cape Verdean ethnic identity by continuing kinship ties to the Islands and by residential contiguity, similar economic and occupational status, and common social institutions in New Bedford. Many but not all of these factors, however, also tie them to the larger Portuguese community in the city. Strong incentives for maintaining the latter tie are created by the pervasive racial status distinctions in American society. To the extent that they are perceived by others as Portuguese, the Cape Verdeans avoid the stigma that Americans place on black and multi-racial groups. However, despite the cultural dissimilarities between Cape Verdeans and most black Americans, and despite their limited contact in New Bedford, Cape Verdeans have not wholly escaped being identified as black by others, especially outside of New Bedford.

Our study has also provided the opportunity to analyze ethnic politics in an unorganized system. Earlier studies in "strong party" cities found stable patterns of resource exchange through political brokers. The parties tended to monopolize political resources and to oppose actively any independent ethnic political organizations. Ethnic communities received political benefits and shared some limited power because of loyal party voting.

We found different patterns in New Bedford. The lack of continuing political organization in the city, resulting from the scarcity of political incentives, makes it difficult for political brokers to establish long-term influence or to centralize bargaining between the ethnic group and political authorities. Independent ethnic organizations are encouraged by politicians to take an active role in politics, not undermined; yet there are few incentives for these groups to work hard. Voting alignments in the ethnic community are fragmented and unstable. As a result, a small ethnic community enjoys influence only when individuals or organizations form alliances with specific officeholders, especially the mayor.

While our investigation of political organization in the Cape Verdean community showed that the relationships described above generally prevail, we found one deviant case: the United Front. An ethnic organization--one capable of overcoming Cape Verdean reluctance to adopt a black identity-- was created, achieved influence, and has endured in one form or another for eight years. Yet it is striking to note the powerful effect of political structure on the life cycle of the United Front. The factors that permitted its formation and success as a protest organization were only temporary disturbances in the normal patterns of politics in New Bedford-- specifically, the provision of (1) material incentives by the federal government, and (2) purposive incentives by the civil rights movement, which crested in New Bedford at the time of Martin Luther King's assassination. When circumstances began to change relatively early in the life of the United Front, more traditional patterns of politics were reasserted. Although the United Front has been able to

maintain itself through tactical changes and adoption of new objectives, it has become a more typical manifestation of ethnic political organization in New Bedford. Its political influence was largely dependent on an alliance with a single powerful officeholder, Mayor Harrington. When that relationship was broken by his retirement, the United Front lost its position as a political broker and lost what remained of its mass following.

We can also observe in the experience of the United Front a confirmation of the proposition earlier asserted that ethnic identity has a strong instrumental component.[44] When the organization appeared to be a potential vehicle for political gain, many Cape Verdeans were willing to adopt the rhetoric of black identity by joining the group; and others sympathized. When these gains did not materialize as anticipated, the Cape Verdean identification reappeared. The realities of ethnic stratification in New Bedford overcame the political alliance between Cape Verdeans and West End blacks.

NOTES

*This paper could not have been written without the patient cooperation of the Cape Verdean and black political activists and public officials of New Bedford, Massachusetts, who permitted us to interview them. Since some of them requested anonymity, we shall name none. All unattributed quotations in this paper are drawn from these interviews. While we are grateful for their help, we must alone shoulder responsibility for our interpretations of what they said.

We also owe thanks to Barbara Levine, Janice Bushell, and Alicia Davis for taking great care in typing this manuscript.

[1] In 1970, according to the U.S. census, New Bedford had 101,759 inhabitants, including 3,335 black people. Nearly all local observers are sure that the latter figure does not include more than a few Cape Verdeans. As nearly as we can find out - and it is a rough estimate - there are twice as many Cape Verdeans as blacks in the city. Local observers also estimate that 60 percent of the city is Portuguese - a figure that includes generations not counted by the census.

[2] There are many extant definitions of "ethnic group". We use the term loosely as a generic term for "any minority group within a dominant pattern [U.S. society], even though the particular unit of identification may be national origin..., linguistic, racial, or religious." Quotation from Daniel Bell, "Ethnicity and Social Change," in Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, eds., Ethnicity (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 156. (Emphasis is in the original.)

[3] This perspective is well represented in Glazer and Moynihan's recent collection, Ethnicity. See Bell, pp. 141-174; Donald L. Horowitz, "Ethnic Identity," pp. 111-140; and Orlando Patterson, "Context and Choice in Ethnic Allegiance," pp. 305-349.

[4] See William L. Yancey, Eugene P. Ericksen, and Richard N. Juliani, "Emergent Ethnicity: A Review and Reformulation," American Sociological Review, 41 (June 1976), 400.

[5] Consider also Patterson, pp. 307-308.

[6] Among these are Elmer E. Cornwell, Jr., "Party Absorption of Ethnic Groups," Social Forces, 38 (March 1960); Theodore J. Lowi, At the Pleasure of the Mayor (New York: Free Press, 1964); Alex Gottfried, Boss Cermak of Chicago (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962); Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970); Ira Katznelson, Black Men, White Cities (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Raymond E. Wolfinger The Politics of Progress (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974); and Lloyd H. Rogler, "The Changing Role of a Political

Boss in a Puerto Rican Migrant Community," American Sociological Review, 39 (February 1974), 57-67. Among the few works that treat "unorganized" systems are William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), pp. 194-252; James Q. Wilson, Negro Politics (New York: Free Press, 1960); and David Greenstone and Paul Peterson, Race and Authority in Urban Politics (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1973).

[7]Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, City Politics (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 164; Gerald Pomper, "Ethnic and Group Voting in Nonpartisan Municipal Elections," Public Opinion Quarterly (Spring 1966), 79-97; Wolfinger, pp. 56-57.

[8]Immanuel Wallerstein, "Ethnicity and National Integration," Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, I (July 1960), 131. Quoted by Horowitz, p. 113.

[9]Yancey, et al., p. 392.

[10]Glazer and Moynihan, "Introduction," Ethnicity, pp. 11-12.

[11]Wolfinger, p. 32.

[12]Bell, p. 171. See also Patterson, p. 312.

[13]Francis M. Rogers, "Americans of Portuguese Descent: A Lesson in Differentiation," Sage Research Papers in the Social Sciences, Studies in Ethnicity and Religion Series, No. 90-013 (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1974), pp. 19-20, 25-26, 30-37.

[14]Rogers, p. 37.

[15]Rogers, pp. 27-28, 50.

[16]Rogers, p. 31.

[17]On this point, see Rogers, p. 50.

[18]See note 6 above.

[19]See note 7 above.

[19a]For an analytical categorization of organizational incentives, see James Q. Wilson, Political Organizations (New York: Basic Books, 1973), Ch.3.

[20]On the latter point, see Martin Meyerson and Edward C. Banfield, Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1955).

[21]Katznelson, pp. 66-77.

[22]See Gottfried; Katznelson, pp. 92-93; and James Q. Wilson, "Two Negro Politicians," Midwest Journal of Political Science (November, 1960).

[23]The concept of a "buffer" comes from Katznelson, p. 25-26; see also Rogler, p. 60.

[24]Wilson, Political Organizations, pp. 83-84.

[25]Rogler, p. 63.

[26]Wolfinger, pp. 54-55.

[27]Such a succession is described by Rogler, p. 60.

[28]Cornwell, p. 209; Lowi, pp. 39-40; and Wolfinger, p. 47.

[29]Wolfinger, p. 38n; Katznelson.

[30]See Matthew Crenson, The Unpolitics of Air Pollution (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), pp. 133-158; Wolfinger, pp. 57-69; Alan Rosenbaum, "Machine Politics, Class Interests, and the Urban Poor," paper presented at the 1973 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Assocation.

[31]Arnold M. Howitt, Strategies of Governing: Electoral Constraints on Mayoral Behavior in Philadelphia and Boston (Cambridge: unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1976), p. 131.

[32]Edward C. Banfield, Political Influence (New York: Free Press, 1960), p. 237; Wolfinger, pp. 77-87, 91; Howitt, pp. 270-271.

[33]This analysis is consistent with Wilson's argument in Political Organizations, pp. 87-90.

[34]Wolfinger, p. 49.

[35]Wilson, Political Organizations, pp. 195-204.

[36]See also Robert H. Salisbury, "An Exchange Theory of Interest Groups," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 13 (February 1969), 1-32; and Norman Frohlich, Joe A. Oppenheimer, and Oran R. Young, Political Leadership and Collective Goods (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971).

[37]Wilson, Political Organizations, p. 204.

[38]Michael Lipsky, "Protest as a Political Resource," American Political Science Review, 62 (December 1968), 1146.

[39]See Martha Derthick, New Towns In-Town (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1972), pp. 69-73.

[40]Lipsky, p. 1150.

[41]See Jeffrey L. Pressman, "Preconditions of Mayoral Leadership," American Political Science Review, 66 (June 1972), 511.

[42]See Derthick, pp. 69-70.

[43]Quotations are from an unpublished version of the 80 demands supplied by a United Front leader to the authors.

[44]See note 12 above.